

A NEW SQUIRREL FROM DIRECTION ISLAND, SOUTH CHINA SEA.

By MARCUS WARD LYON, JR.,

Second Assistant Curator, Division of Mammals, U. S. National Museum.

On his way to Borneo, in 1907, Dr. W. L. Abbott stopped for a day at Direction Island, where he secured a single specimen of the new species of plantain squirrel described below. Direction Island, also called Pulo Mankotan and Pulo Pengiki Kichil (or Paneeky Ketchil), lies in the South China Sea in latitude $0^{\circ} 14' 39''$ north and longitude $108^{\circ} 1' 53''$ east. Politically and geographically it is a member of the Tambelan group, of which it is the most southeastern. An account of the mammals of this group and of some adjacent islands was published by Mr. Gerrit S. Miller, jr.,^a in 1900.

Doctor Abbott says of the island: "It is about three-fourths mile long by about one-fourth mile wide, and 500 to 600 feet high. The surface is rocky, but covered with trees except at the southwest corner, where a clearing has been made by the Orang Laut, who occasionally visit the island. Here a few coconuts have been planted, also some bananas and papaya. A number of squirrels were heard, but only two were seen, of which one was shot. No other mammal was seen, although there were doubtless rats. There were many white fruit pigeons. Turtles had been laying their eggs on the sand beach, where there were also many tracks of *Varanus* lizards."

SCIURUS DIRECTOR, new species.

Type.—Skin and skull of an immature (large permanent upper premolar just displacing the milk tooth) male, Cat. No. 145392, U.S.N.M., collected on Direction Island, South China Sea, May 1, 1907, by Dr. W. L. Abbott. Original number, 5152.

Diagnostic characters.—A "red"-bellied member of the *vittatus* group characterized by a more ruddy cast to the entire pelage than usual.

^a Mammals collected by Dr. W. L. Abbott on islands in the South China Sea, Proc. Wash. Acad. Sci., II, pp. 203-246, August 20, 1900.

Color.—Upper parts of head and body, a fine grizzle of black and ochraceous or ochraceous-buff, both colors about equally mixed, the ochraceous being somewhat paler over the shoulders than elsewhere, and darkest posteriorly and in the region of the thighs; upper surface of the tail very similar to upper surface of head and body in color, but the grizzling is coarser and in certain lights the tail appears finely annulated; outer sides of thighs and arms similar to back, but with finer grizzling and the ochraceous predominating; upper surfaces of feet dull ochraceous darkened by the blackish bases of the hairs showing through; light side-stripe, about 55 by 5 mm., between buff and ochraceous-buff; dark side-stripe, about 50 by 7 mm., blackish finely sprinkled with ochraceous-buff; underparts and inner side of fore and hind legs a color something between Ridgway's ochraceous-buff and ochraceous-rufous; underside of tail a very coarse grizzle of blackish and ochraceous, the latter color predominating in the middle line; inner side of ears and an orbital ring, the lower half of which is most pronounced, ochraceous-buff; outer side of ears similar to adjacent parts of head; cheeks and base of whiskers similar to rest of head, but grizzle very fine and the ochraceous-buff predominating.

Skull and teeth.—These show no special peculiarities; the audital bullæ and teeth, however, are smaller than they are in the majority of species of squirrels of the *vittatus* group.

Measurements.—External measurements taken by collector: Head and body, 190 mm.; tail vertebræ, 182; hind foot, with claws, 49. Cranial measurements: Greatest length, 46.4; basal length, 39; zygomatic breadth, 26.7; interorbital constriction, 16; mandible, front of symphysis to back of condyle, 29.5; maxillary toothrow (alveoli), 9.2; mandibular toothrow (alveoli), 8.7.

Specimens examined.—One, the type.

Remarks.—Compared with its geographical neighbor, *Sciurus abbottii* Miller,^a of Big Tambelan Island, *S. director* is conspicuously more ruddy throughout, being ochraceous or ochraceous-rufous where *S. abbottii* is only buffy or ochraceous-buff. Among the forms of the *S. vittatus* group of squirrels in the National Museum *S. tedongus* Lyon,^b from the island of Banka, most nearly resembles *S. director*, but is less ruddy, except on the belly, which has about the same color in the two species.

^a Proc. Wash. Acad. Sci., II, p. 224, August 20, 1900.

^b Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XXXI, p. 591, December 18, 1906.